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Publications



The Ontario
Provincial Parks
Council

1975

First Annual
Report

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Chairman's Letter to the Minister

March 1976

Dear Mr. Minister:

I attach the first Annual Report of your Provincial Parks Council for the period ending December 31, 1975.

The report summarizes results of our deliberations on the new park classification system, a recommended hunting and fishing policy for provincial parks, a statement summarizing our deliberations on the 'near-urban' park question, as well as the Council's findings following monitoring of the implementation of the Algonquin Park master plan.

Public hearings were held in Thunder Bay, Bancroft and Toronto. A summary of how these hearings were conducted and the results considered is discussed. A list of all the individuals and agencies who made a presentation to the Council is included.

The Annual Report concludes with a tentative agenda and a list of concerns that the Advisory Council might examine in the current year.

The Council looks forward to the opportunity of advising you on park matters again in 1976.

Yours sincerely,



G. Priddle, Chairman

Acknowledgements

The Council is indebted to a great many people and organizations for making its work possible. Council would like to take this opportunity to thank the Honourable Leo Bernier, Minister of Natural Resources for bringing the Council into being, giving it financial support, and for showing a continuing interest in it. The personnel of the Division of Parks of the Ministry were, and continue to be invaluable, not only in Toronto, but also in the Thunder Bay, Huntsville and London regions that Council visited in 1975. Park staff in Algonquin, Bronte, Komoka, Rondeau, and Sibley provided us excellent support. In the Toronto office Jim Keenan, the Executive Director, Tom Lee the former Director of Planning, Ron Vrancart the present Director of Planning and Russ Tilt our coordinator, must be singled out for special mention. In Waterloo, Jean Fraser acted as secretary and ran the Council office single handedly with occasional assistance from the Chairman. The Parks Council owes a great deal of thanks to the many individuals and organizations that came forward to express their views through correspondence, phone calls, or in a public hearing. The many issues and points of view that were received by this means added immeasurably to Council's deliberations.

A special note of thanks to Rod Hummel, who retired from the Ministry of Natural Resources at the end of 1975. One of his last tasks with the Ministry was to act as the Council's secretary. All of us feel richer for having become a friend of Rod's.



Members of Council

Provincial Parks Council
Members at Algonquin Park

The Provincial Parks Council

(Established under Section 6 of the Provincial Parks Act)

Terms of Reference

1 To advise the Minister of Natural Resources in respect to the policy (Planning, Management and Development) of the Provincial Parks system in relation to changing public needs;

2 to monitor and make recommendations on the implementation of the Algonquin Park Master Plan and such other park master plans as may be referred to it by the Minister;

3 to report to the Minister on such matters as he may refer to the Council;

4 in addition to such other reports the Council may make, it shall submit an Annual Report to the Minister;

5 the Council may with the approval of the Minister engage the advice and assistance of specialists or consultants;

6 the Council shall hold public meetings to receive briefs, at least annually, and at such other times as the Minister may direct.

Terms of Council

1 The Council shall consist of not more than twenty members appointed for one, two or three year terms and eligible for reappointment;

2 the Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be designated by the Minister;

3 the Chairman and Members shall be paid a per diem allowance and expenses consistent with Government policy.

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The Year's Program

The Honourable Leo Bernier announced the establishment of the Parks Council on October 22, 1974. The Council met initially in early December in Toronto for the purpose of meeting Mr. Bernier and a briefing by Ministry personnel on matters relevant to the tasks Council had been charged with by the Minister.

Council was asked to consider specifically:

- a) the implementation of the Algonquin Park Master Plan
- b) a policy for 'Near-Urban' parks
- c) a policy for hunting and fishing in parks
- d) the revised park classification system

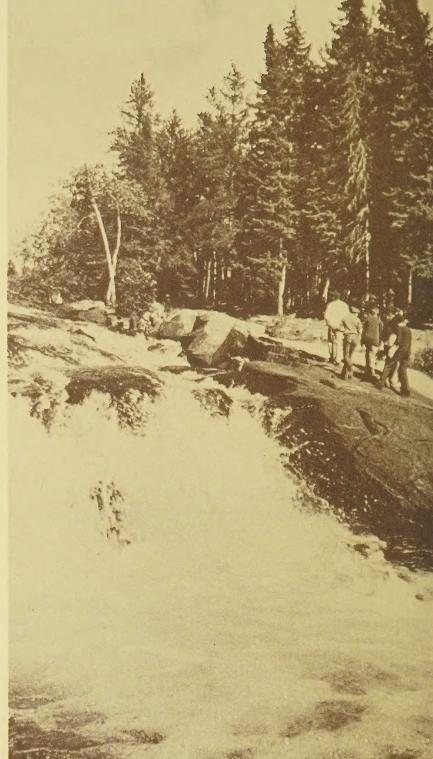
Council met again in Toronto on March 6 and 7, 1975. This meeting was largely devoted to a thorough introductory discussion of the new Park Classification documents. A visit to Bronte Provincial Park was included on the agenda.

The May meeting in Thunder Bay included visits to Sibley Provincial Park and Old Fort William. Public Hearings were held and sixteen briefs were heard.

Council reconvened in London, Ontario in June to begin final discussion on the Park Classification System. As in Thunder Bay, the regional office of the Ministry of Natural Resources made a presentation on their park operations. During the London meeting, Council took field trips to Springbank Park, the proposed site of Komoka Park and Rondeau Park.

The fifth Meeting of Council took place in Algonquin Park. The primary purpose of our visit to Algonquin was to observe and report upon the implementation of the Algonquin Park master plan. Ministry staff responded to a series of questions about the plan and its implementation and provided both an aerial tour of the park and a bus tour of the highway 60 corridor. Discussion on the park classification system continued.

On September 26, 1975, a committee of six Council members held a public meeting in Bancroft to hear individuals and delegations speak to the issue of Algonquin Park and the new master plan.



The sixth meeting of Council was held in Toronto, October 19-21. A presentation was made on the Hills' Classification System. Two members of the Coalition for Wilderness spoke at Council's request, on differences between their policies for wilderness in Ontario and that of the Division of Parks as suggested in the newly proposed park classification documents.

A draft position paper on policy for hunting and fishing in parks written by a member of Council was discussed in detail and amended to reflect Council's diverse views. Sixteen briefs were heard at a public meeting during the afternoon and evening of October 20.

Council held its final meeting of 1975 on December 4 and 5 in Toronto to complete its deliberations on the hunting and fishing issue, to prepare responses to the briefs presented in Bancroft and in Toronto, and to begin discussion on the 'near-urban' park concept. Clarification of the role of the Council relevant to the Algonquin Park issue was provided by the Ministry. The Chairman was charged with writing a first draft of the Annual Report for the next meeting in Dorset, February 5 and 6, 1976.

Summary Statements

Park Classification

- 1 The proposed park classification system is a welcome and important step towards the much needed adoption of a definite park policy.
- 2 The importance of Nature Reserves cannot be emphasized enough. Council requested that it be given an opportunity to review any decision to reject a Nature Reserve.
- 3 Research should be done by the Ministry into the various forms of land and management agreements that could be undertaken to protect our valuable parkland and open spaces.
- 4 Criteria other than just botanical, (habitat of rare species for example), should be used in determining the location of nature reserves.
- 5 The primary purpose of wilderness should be preservation.
- 6 The importance of the concept of 'nature over man' or the 'primacy of nature' in our provincial parks was stressed.
- 7 The question was raised as to whether it is possible to manage wilderness areas and nature reserves within an 'extractive' ministry.
- 8 Knowledge is sought as to how much land the province is prepared to commit to non-extractive uses.
- 9 The adequacy of recreational parks is determined on the basis of the accessibility of these parks to where people live. It was stressed by Council that such determinants should take into consideration inflows and outflows of park users to the region.
- 10 The waterways document needs further study.
- 11 The immediate investigation and protection of our rapidly disappearing natural waterway resources is urgent.
- 12 There should be a separate category within the classification system for historical parks.
- 13 When using the 'site region' in selecting nature reserves and wilderness parks, provision must also be made for preserving the dramatic and the unique in the landscape.
- 14 There is a need to rewrite the Provincial Parks Act to allow for the statutory establishment of park boundaries and zones.

Hunting and Fishing

- 15 No hunting or fishing should be allowed in nature reserves.
- 16 Fishing should be allowed in wilderness areas, but no special management to increase fish yields or to manipulate the waters to improve fishing should be allowed.
- 17 Hunting could be allowed in a wilderness area and wilderness zones if it is at all times subservient to other users and uses.
- 18 Fishing with special management should be allowed in natural environment and recreation parks.

- 19 Hunting could be a possible use of natural environment and recreation parks where it does not conflict with other users.
- 20 Hunting and fishing by Indians should be subject to the same rules, assuming there has been prior settlement of Indian claims.
- 21 Trapping is seen being allowed as a management tool but not as a commercial activity in the parks.

Parks Near Urban Areas

- 22 The Division of Parks should not get into the business of providing parks near urban areas in southern Ontario unless they are large, natural, and cater to natural environment recreational activity.
- 23 When provincial parks near urban areas are developed, it should be with the full participation and involvement of the local and regional authorities from the earliest stage. Public participation should be an integral part of the planning development and management process.
- 24 Provincial parks near urban areas should be readily accessible by public transit.
- 25 Provincial parks near urban areas should have a significant buffer zone.
- 26 The Division of Parks should work closely with local and regional authorities and the public in the establishment and management of provincial parks near urban areas.
- 27 Local authorities should assume some financial responsibility for the management of provincial parks near large urban areas in Southern Ontario.

Algonquin Park

- 28 Disappointment was expressed with the inability of the government to come to grips with the implementation of the master plan for Algonquin Park.
- 29 As a start to the implementation of the quota system in Algonquin Park, the highway 60 corridor access should have quotas in 1976.
- 30 The motor boat ban in Algonquin should be postponed one more year.
- 31 Serious consideration should be given to significantly enlarging the primitive zone in Algonquin Park.
- 32 The policy to terminate leases in Algonquin Park is supported.

Other

- 33 In light of the serious problem of rowdyism, park regulations should be enforced in spite of the cost.
- 34 There is need for the early acceptance of a park policy.
- 35 A number of definite steps have been suggested by Council to improve the Ministry's communication with the public.
- 36 Because of the wide differences in park needs between the peoples of northern and southern Ontario, we will continue to address and suggest policies and recommendations that are cognizant of these differences.
- 37 There is a need for an effective relationship to be created between different park jurisdictions—national, provincial, regional and the private sector.

Park Classification

The newly proposed Park Classification System was the first matter considered in detail by the Parks Council.

The first Ontario Park Classification System was introduced in 1967. It was an attempt to classify existing Provincial Parks and to suggest what their function, and hence their management should be.

The proposed classification attempts to develop a model that helps to evaluate the provincial parks system as it now exists, as well as suggesting the needs and priorities that must be realized in order to have an effective park system in the future. Consideration and acceptance of these documents represents an important move toward a park policy for the Province. To accomplish this task, the Division of Parks of the Ministry of Natural Resources produced five documents stamped 'Preliminary' in early 1975. The documents are entitled *Administrative Policies of the Ontario Provincial Parks System*.

The documents are respectively subtitled: (i) Nature Reserves, (ii) Wilderness Areas, (iii) Natural Environment Parks, (iv) Recreation Parks and (v) Provincial Waterways. These are the five types of parks that under the proposed system would make up the provincial parks. Each of these documents follows a similar format. In the preface the objective of the outdoor recreation programme of the Ministry of Natural Resources is stated:

To provide from public lands and waters and to encourage on other lands and waters:

A wide variety of outdoor recreational opportunities accessible to and for the continuous benefit of the people of Ontario.

The identification and conservation of unique or representative physical, biological, cultural and historical features of the Province.

A continuous contribution to the economy of Ontario from tourism and its related industries.

The main text of each document is divided into three parts. The first part discusses the history, philosophy and the purpose of that particular type of park. A policy statement is proposed. The second part of each document suggests the relationship of that type of park to the overall park system. An approach towards determining the need and desirable locations for this kind of park is given. A method is implicit for evaluating an existing or proposed park of that particular classification.

Section three of each document outlines appropriate management. Management is considered in terms of planning, zoning, land and water management, forest and vegetation management, and fish and wildlife management. Consideration is also given to visitor programmes, scientific research, educational and cultural programmes.

It is impractical to duplicate the contents of these documents within the confines of this report, but reference to them is given.*

*Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Division of Parks, *Administrative Policies of the Ontario Provincial Parks System*, Toronto: 1975.

They are subtitled:

Recreation Parks in Ontario
Nature Reserves in Ontario
Wilderness Areas in Ontario
Natural Environment Parks in Ontario
Provincial Waterways in Ontario
Historical Parks in Ontario

These extensive documents and relevant background materials, were presented to the Council by staff of the Division of Parks. Once the documents were understood, each member of Council received a questionnaire on each of the classification documents. These questionnaires solicited a point by point consideration and response to the classification documents. An additional questionnaire dealt exclusively with names and name changes proposed by the park classification documents.

The Parks Council found the proposed system to be acceptable and a major step towards the adoption of a definite Ontario Parks Policy. The following is a result of Council's deliberation on name changes, and the points in the documents on which there is a difference of opinion.

Name Changes

It was resolved by the Parks Council that:

- 1 Primitive parks should be named Wilderness Areas.
- 2 Nature Reserves should be named Provincial Park Nature Reserves.
- 3 Natural zones should be named Nature Reserve Zones.
- 4 The 'Access Zone' should be prefaced by what it gives access to, eg. 'Wilderness Access Zone'.
- 5 Two criteria should be used in determining names: (i) the actual use planned for the space, and (ii) public understanding.

Not resolved and tabled for further discussion:

- 1 There is no consensus as to the use of the terms 'multiple use zones' or 'natural environment zones'.
- 2 There was little agreement about the use of the terms 'recreation zone' or 'development zone'.

Natural Environment Parks

Ten resolutions were passed agreeing with various aspects of the document on Natural Environment Parks. A number of Council members felt that Natural Environment Parks should be called 'Multiple Use Parks'.



Nature Reserves

Sixteen resolutions were passed agreeing with various aspects of the document on Nature Reserves.

In the policy statement six functions are suggested for Nature Reserves:

- 1 Contain the original, natural genetic material found in Ontario.
- 2 Represent the geological and natural processes which have shaped the Province.
- 3 Serve as benchmark areas against which to measure environmental conditions and change.
- 4 Make a positive contribution to scientific knowledge and to society through the application of this knowledge.
- 5 Provide for outdoor educational opportunities for individuals, groups, and institutions at all levels.
- 6 Perform a recreational role for leisure time activities.

Points 1 to 4 should take precedence over 5 and 6 if it becomes an issue.

An additional statement should be included in the document that would explain the 'Hills' system for delineating the various kinds of natural regions in the Province.

If a proposal for a Nature Reserve may be rejected on the basis of other considerations, there should be full opportunity for consideration by the Council before any decision is made to reject a proposed Nature Reserve.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and/or the provincial government should research into the various types of land agreements that might be utilized in the acquisition of parkland. Future park and open space may well have to be provided in large part by cooperative agreements and arrangements between the public and the private sector.

Further Discussion

Nature Reserves should be given the same protection that we give famous or original works of art.

When considering eradication of non-native species, some protection should be given to the habitats introduced by the early pioneers. Criteria other than botanical should be used in the locating of Nature Reserves. Nesting grounds of colonial birds, the edge of ranges for species, endangered or rare species habitat, and migration concentration points are cases in point. A major concern is not the concept of Nature Reserves but the realization of Nature Reserves.

Wilderness Areas

Seven resolutions agree with various aspects of the document dealing with Wilderness Parks.

It was suggested that the primary purpose for Wilderness should be preservation.

The words 'although its primary purpose will be recreation' should be removed from the policy statement of the document.

Discussion was tabled on hunting and fishing policy in Wilderness Areas until after Council's deliberations on hunting and fishing.

Further Discussion

A problem in determining 'wilderness' is the question of size, i.e. how large does an area have to be before it is a functional wilderness?

The Council debated whether it was possible to manage wilderness areas within an extractive ministry, and speculated on how much land the province was prepared to dedicate to wilderness use. Only educational studies and scientific research of a non-destructive nature should be allowed in provincial parks.

If it is impossible to locate 'wilderness areas' by site regions in the south then dedication in the north should compensate for this lack.

Recreation Parks

Ten resolutions were passed agreeing with various aspects of the document concerning Recreation Parks.

The adequacy of the provision of recreation parks is assessed on the availability of the acreage per capita supply within two hours drive of Ontario residents. When such adequacies are being determined, the 'leakage factor', or the inflows and outflows of park users to the region must be taken into account.

The government policy discouraging competitive athletics in provincial parks should be continued.

Provincial Waterways

Considerable discussion of this document took place. The document dealing with provincial waterways should be given further study by the ministry.

The early investigation and protection of our rapidly disappearing natural waterway resources is urged.

Further Discussion

'Waterways' need not be a separate classification. It was the Chairman's opinion that this category should be given further consideration and possibly be expanded to include all forms of 'linear' recreation lands: coasts, trails, scenic roads or rivers.



Hunting and Fishing

In reviewing hunting and fishing in provincial parks the Council worked from a position paper which reviewed the Ministry's objectives and its out-of-door recreation programme, together with the opportunities for hunting and fishing both in the parks and public lands in Ontario generally, as well as with some of the policies of regimes elsewhere.

Most Council members agreed that hunting and fishing are legitimate recreational activities which have a place in the public lands of the Province. However, a small minority of Council members felt that hunting is not a legitimate recreational activity, and consequently believe that it does not have a place in public lands. There was full agreement with the position that, to the extent that hunting and fishing may influence the "conservation of unique or representative physical, biological, cultural and historical features" preserved in the Provincial Parks, and to the degree to which they come into conflict with other users of the parks, these activities must be curtailed or excluded there.

Resolutions Passed by Council on the Proposed Park Classification System

- 1 The proposed park classification is welcome and its realization would greatly enhance the Ontario Park System.
- 2 The real utility of the classification system is that it represents an important step towards the development of an Ontario Park Policy.
- 3 The classification system provides a useful vehicle for assessing the adequacy of parks in a particular region as well as the adequacy of the provision of a particular type of park throughout the Province.
- 4 There should be a separate classification for historical parks so that the adequacy of the park system can be evaluated regardless of the Ministry(ies) or governments involved.
- 5 There tends to be an over emphasis on the word recreation and a lack of emphasis on 'the primacy of nature over man' in the provincial park system.
- 6 Although some concern was expressed over the feasibility of zoning in parks, a motion was passed to the effect that zoning in parks was imperative as a planning and management tool.
- 7 As far as recreational parks are concerned, the provincial parks should continue to provide such facilities and they should encourage other jurisdictions and the private sector to provide and manage an increasing proportion of such facilities.
- 8 In evaluating the adequacy of parks in terms of the number of park opportunities within particular distances of Ontario residents, there is definite need to account for non-resident use.
- 9 Utilizing the 'site region' concept in selecting nature reserves and wilderness parks should not be permitted to follow the 'collector' or 'one-of-a-kind' mentality. In selecting sites for nature reserves and wilderness parks, the dramatic and the unique should definitely be considered.
- 10 There is a need to rewrite the Provincial Parks Act to allow for the statutory establishment of park boundaries and zones.
- 11 An intensive public education program of the park classification system is required.

Expanding on the matter of conflict, hunting is such a space consuming and exclusionary recreation it must of necessity take a secondary position to other recreational uses. Although hunting often occurs at a different time to other outdoor recreational pursuits, a growing trend towards year-round outdoor recreation could intensify any conflicts which exist. An indication of the potential for conflict amongst the public was reflected in the closeness of Council voting on the proposition that "recreational hunting is not a suitable activity for a park". Of fourteen persons voting, eight agreed with the proposition and six disagreed.

The reasons for opposition to hunting are varied: Some persons feel that taking life as a form of recreation is immoral, while other persons who may be prepared to tolerate hunting generally find hunting in parks distasteful because they see parks as sanctuaries. Still others view hunting as noisy, or disruptive, or potentially dangerous.

Finally, those who value wildlife viewing may find this difficult or impossible where hunting is occurring. This diversity of opposing views suggests that a very careful and sensitive approach to game management and the provision of public hunting must be taken if misunderstandings are not to arise and conflicts intensify. Proposals for hunting and fishing policy in the specific park classes in the new classification system were considered, and these were:

Provincial Nature Reserves

There was agreement that no hunting or fishing should be allowed in Provincial Nature Reserves except as conducted by the Ministry using Ministry personnel for management purposes. Where the reserve contains waters which are not specifically associated with the objectives of the reserve itself, then controlled fishing there could be allowed.

Wilderness Areas

There was agreement that fishing be allowed in Wilderness Areas, but that no special management for fishing should occur. In this context special management would mean the manipulation of the species in the waters to improve fishing either by restocking, the elimination or reduction of non-game species, or by similar management techniques. Regulations on the types of bait and equipment to be used and the numbers of fish to be caught or taken would be appropriate, and these should be based on the character of the individual waters. All fishing should be taken in the context of a wilderness experience and should follow the regulations imposed on other users of the wilderness area. There was some discussion on the desirability of stocking a particular species where a lake in a wilderness area was 'fished out'. Since this would be an unnatural condition that would not normally occur in an established wilderness area, restocking could be appropriate. The determining factor in both this and in the management of the fishing generally should be its impact on the nature reserve role that wilderness areas fill.

Although fishing is a passive sport, those who feel that parks should be sanctuaries for all living things would find fishing distasteful as well.

The new classification proposed that hunting with 'primitive' equipment should be allowed in wilderness areas. This is philosophically consistent with the concept of wilderness to some extent, although there does not appear to be evidence of much demand for such activities in Ontario at present. Against such hunting was the possibility of conflict with other users of these areas, vagueness in the definition of 'primitive' and the possibility of reduced opportunity for wildlife viewing which is also part of a wilderness experience.

Favouring hunting was the size of the parks which might enable hunting to be separated from other park activities such as viewing, and concern that elimination of hunting would create opposition to wilderness areas.

Initially Council agreed to a proposition that primitive hunting and regular hunting be excluded from wilderness areas. Following debate, however, the decision was reversed and Council voted eleven in favour and seven opposed to hunting being allowed in wilderness areas. A subsequent resolution that hunting could be included in wilderness areas and wilderness zones, subject at all times to management techniques and controls and subservient to other users of these areas and zones, passed with twelve in favour and four opposed. Some of the uncertainty seemed to be because some members felt that due to the large size of wilderness areas, they should be looked at on a park-by-park basis. These members felt that provision of hunting should be based on the type of hunting, the character of the individual parks, and the ability to separate hunting from other park activities.

Natural Environment Parks

There was agreement with a proposal that fishing be allowed in natural environment parks as at present, with special management as appropriate to the various park zones to ensure the integrity of the waters. This management should assure that the utilization was never contrary to the basic policy for all zones of the park.

Natural Environment Parks in many ways offer the widest range of recreational experiences available in the provincial system. Hunting in these parks is already relatively limited, and the potential for conflict can be particularly strong. In recognition of the diversity of uses and opportunities that these very diverse parks offer a group of resolutions was developed which sought to minimize the potential for conflict and at the same time provide hunting where this was appropriate. On a simple proposal that hunting should be allowed in Natural Environment Parks, four members agreed and nine disagreed.

Apart from those members who felt that hunting was not a legitimate recreational activity, there was agreement with the proposal to eliminate hunting from the small natural environment parks in the south of the Province, and that when this reflected hardship to the hunting community suitable wildlife management areas should be developed to replace the opportunities lost. There was some sense that the presence or absence of hunting in a park should not be dependent on the availability of alternative wildlife management areas: one alternative wording which was suggested was that "where possible suitable wildlife management areas should be developed". There was also some debate as to what was meant by 'small'. In practice, only Presqu'ile and Rondeau seemed to fall into this category.

A second resolution offering hunting by primitive techniques in natural environment parks was unanimously deleted. The third resolution on hunting in natural environment was that in areas of large parks where other recreational uses are at a minimum, and hence the potential for conflict is also negligible, controlled hunting be allowed. Fourteen out of eighteen members agreed with this resolution.

Recreational Parks

The resolution on fishing in recreational parks was identical to that proposed for natural environment parks, and received the same support.

A review of the recreational parks suggested that their main use is directed towards camping and beach-style activities which do not usually extend into the hunting season. As the natural environment qualities of these parks are relatively low, hunting would be unlikely to conflict with other uses. The emphasis in recreational parks is towards providing a range of recreational experiences, and wildlife management for hunting seems an appropriate element in this programme. Hence the resolution, that hunting be allowed in recreational parks is appropriate. Initially there seemed to be a fair measure of agreement with this, but in the end it passed by a narrow margin; nine agreeing, eight opposed and one abstaining.

Some of the increased opposition seemed to stem from the recognition that camping now extends into the hunting season and conflicts might be more serious than the resolution suggested.

Provincial Waterways

This classification was not dealt with as a separate entity. It appeared that the various components in the provincial waterways system could all be related to one of the other park classes (for example, wild rivers corresponded to wilderness areas) and the appropriate resolutions would apply. In the case of historic rivers an approach similar to that proposed in natural environment parks would seem to be most appropriate.

There are some comments on hunting and fishing generally. Some members felt strongly that all life should be protected in provincial parks. It was also suggested that, in spite of generalizations on the impacts of hunting and fishing in parks, in fact an informed decision could not really be made on impacts unless hunting and fishing was halted for a certain number of years. It might then become clear that certain parks were suitable for hunting and fishing and others not, but without an actual trial it is difficult to make a reasonable decision.

A resolution to intensify the development of wildlife management areas, which again would emphasize multiple-use, low intensity recreation including hunting, was supported by fourteen out of eighteen persons voting. The sentiments of those opposed was that there are many lands suitable for hunting, and heavy commitments of public money to support this activity are inappropriate. Other members thought there was insufficient information on the availability of wildlife management areas to make a decision.

Although peripheral to the matter of fishing in parks, the subject of fishing licenses was raised again, and clearly this issue has caused considerable concern. Sixteen persons voted in favour of the provincial angling license, and the same number were in favour of a special fishing license in parks, while two were opposed.



Native People's, Hunting and Fishing

There is concern for the livelihood of native peoples who depend on the land for subsistence hunting and fishing. This kind of activity is very different from recreational hunting and fishing, and special consideration should be given to it. However, its effects on the animal populations being hunted, and its potential for conflict with park users (if it occurs in a park) is little different from recreational hunting and fishing. Hence it is the same as any other hunting and fishing and (given settlement on Indian claims) the same rules should apply. This resolution is specific to parks, and hunting and fishing on Crown lands generally is an altogether different issue.

Trapping

Trapping of species such as muskrat or beaver could well be necessary as a management tool. It was not to this kind of trapping that the discussion referred, but rather to commercial trapping in parks. There is already fairly rigid control and management on trapping on Crown lands. On the resolution that trapping is inappropriate in a park except for management purposes, sixteen out of eighteen were in agreement.

There was concern for the elimination of trapping where this was someone's historic livelihood. Perhaps in these special cases a person might be allowed to continue for their lifetime, but the trapping terminated at that point. In the case of Indians some other accommodation should be made if they have been depending on a park trapping as a livelihood and no alternative source of income is available.

Provincial Parks Near Urban Areas

One of the initial directives given to the Council from the Minister of Natural Resources was to analyze and discuss the role of provincial parks that might be developed at locations close to urban areas in the province. To date the Division of Parks has not developed a policy for the so-called 'near-urban' provincial parks even though two such parks, namely, Short Hills and Bronte are being developed at the present time and Komoka, adjacent to London, is under study.

In response to the Minister's request, three members of the Parks Council developed position papers on the topic of 'near-urban' provincial parks. These papers focused on three questions: namely, the need for the development of 'near-urban' parks; what these parks might consist of; and finally, how might such initiatives be implemented assuming the Division of Parks decided to give 'near-urban' parks some priority on future land acquisitions and development.

Field excursions to sites around Metropolitan Toronto assisted in gaining a better appreciation of the relationship between different jurisdictions, each of which have the common objective of providing urban residents of Toronto with open space resources. In addition, the full Council had an opportunity to visit Bronte Provincial Park, a so-called 'near-urban' provincial park currently open to the public but not yet completely developed.

The comments that follow represent a consensus of opinion of the Council members. They are based, in part, on the results of a 'near-urban' provincial park questionnaire that was completed following discussion of the position papers and, secondly, by ensuing discussions and debate. For the purpose of Council's discussions, the term 'near-urban' was adopted to denote areas located close to urban areas that may offer potential for provincial park development.

The Need for Near-Urban Provincial Parks

Some of the rationale for larger parks near urban areas in southern Ontario are as follows:

- a) frequently there is insufficient parkland of any type near urban areas;
- b) land that is close to urban areas is expensive, which often makes it difficult for a local municipality to acquire quality areas or areas of large size;
- c) many disadvantaged urban residents have little opportunity to visit a provincial park or any other area of natural landscape because they are usually located at some distance from urban areas and not easily accessible by public transportation;
- d) the federal and provincial emphasis on developing parks located in relatively remote areas has encouraged the highway-automobile situation which is coming to be recognized as increasingly costly and undesirable for many in our urban society;
- e) municipalities that presently provide parkland adjacent to urban areas have tended to allow the natural qualities of the landscape to deteriorate due, in part, to over use, but also because the municipality has attempted to satisfy all users by providing every type of recreational activity. The end result is that municipal and regional parkland often does not provide the natural environment type of experience that urban residents are seeking.

In other areas of the Province, especially in the north and in regions with smaller centres of population, urban residents are often seeking more intensive forms of recreation in parks adjacent to these smaller centres rather than the experience of the natural environment. In many cases the municipalities have not been able to afford to develop these forms of recreation activities and facilities.

The need for 'near-urban' provincial parks is evident. Municipalities cannot be expected to meet this need alone in future. The development of provincial parks offering urban residents the natural environment type of experience should be initiated as soon as possible by the Division of Parks of the Ministry of Natural Resources. At the same time, the Provincial Government, with the support of the Minister of Natural Resources, should initiate through other agencies such as the Ministry of Culture and Recreation, the municipalities, or the private sector, the development of intensive forms of recreation activities and facilities for urban residents of smaller centres in Ontario.

The Concept of a Near-Urban Provincial Park

It is suggested that the concept of a 'near-urban' park should include the following:

- a) the natural landscape set aside for the purpose of providing a 'near-urban' provincial park should be fairly extensive in size and be representative of the area it is intended to preserve;
- b) the park area should be accessible to some form of public transportation so as to make it easier for urban residents to visit the location;
- c) it is essential that an area either inside or outside of the park boundary serve as a buffer zone or space to insulate the natural landscape inside the park from conflicting land uses and associated activities that may exist or develop on lands adjacent to the near-urban provincial park;
- d) in determining sites and locations for 'near-urban' provincial parks in Ontario, consideration should be given to plans and proposals of other agencies that are providing areas for leisure time pursuits at the local and regional levels. Only in this way will a coordinated and complementary plan of development for 'near-urban' parks and recreation activities and facilities be provided for the urban resident;
- e) 'near-urban' provincial parks do not require a special classification in the classification system of provincial parks in Ontario. Parks of this type established in the future need only fit one of the existing classes, e.g., natural environment park. The zoning, and allowable activities within zones of any 'near-urban' provincial park, would then be responsive to the particular class of park decided upon. However, the emphasis for developing 'near-urban' provincial parks should be directed at the class of park that stresses maintenance of the natural environment and landscape, and any recreational activities that are developed in these areas should be compatible with that objective. Therefore, low priority should be given to providing intensive recreation activities and related facilities and to accommodation for motorized recreation vehicles or transient automobile campers in 'near-urban' provincial parks. However, in keeping with the overall park objective, an activity such as 'walk-in' camping might be allowed on a controlled basis.

In conclusion, 'near-urban' provincial parks incorporating the criteria outlined above may require more intensive forms of management and interpretive services than would be the case for other provincial parks in more remote areas of Ontario. This will be necessary because of the volume of use these areas will receive; the year-round access and use of the parks; and, the nature of the users themselves—many of whom will be visiting a provincial park and natural area for the first time.

Implementation of the Near-Urban Provincial Park Concept

A near-urban parks policy will only succeed if great sensitivity to local needs and conditions is used in selecting and developing these parks. To meet this objective the Division of Parks should in the early stages of research and planning determine the role of the various jurisdictions in the area under study. This would include Conservation Authorities, individual municipalities and, in some cases, regional governments. The role of each, regarding the proposed 'near-urban' park area, must be clarified for the benefit of all parties concerned.

Prior to any public announcement of the development of a 'near-urban' provincial park, each of the jurisdictions concerned should be consulted so that questions pertaining to potential impact, public support and public input to the actual planning of these areas can be resolved. Failure to do so could lead to outright non-support of the park, delays in implementation of a park proposal, or resentment directed at the Division of Parks and the Provincial Government.

The successful development of provincial parks close to urban areas will require a significant amount of public participation in the planning process. Participants should include: local citizens; political representatives from the various jurisdictions in the proposed park area; the Provincial Government; and individuals with professional expertise in the field of park and recreation planning.

The degree and type of public participation in the planning process for the establishment of a 'near-urban' provincial park will depend greatly on the specific situation. In some cases an advisory committee might be formed while in others the opportunity for public participation might be achieved by the provision of a series of public meetings. Whatever method is used, it is imperative that some type of public participation be developed at the very beginning of the process and be included in both the development and the conceptual plan for each 'near-urban' provincial park.

Various jurisdictions associated with urban centres in Ontario have attempted to provide parks that focus on preserving the natural landscape for their ratepayers. While there are examples of such areas throughout the province, the major obstacle to their development is cost. One result of the development of provincial parks near urban centres would be the easing of demands currently being made on local jurisdictions for providing such areas. Therefore, in areas where the province does develop a 'near-urban' park, the local government agencies currently being pressured to provide these areas should assume some financial responsibility for their development.

Algonquin Park

The Council's second term of reference reads: "to monitor and make recommendations on the implementation of the Algonquin Park Master Plan . . .". The Council dealt specifically with its Algonquin Park mandate in several ways.

1 Ministry of Natural Resources personnel spoke to Council on the implementation of the master plan with all its related problems. It immediately became clear that projected programs had progressed slowly due to staffing and funding restraints. In the first year alone (1975-76), staff complement was cut from ten to one, and the budget reduced from 2.7 million dollars to 1.5 million dollars. As a result, implementation really became consolidation with primary emphasis on (i) land acquisition of critical perimeter park areas and (ii) specific concentration upon planning. There would be minimal construction and development until adequate staff was allocated. The mini-budget for July 1975 cut further into the program so, in essence, 1975 became an information and education year.

A revised implementation plan has been prepared focusing on three alternatives: implementation in 20 years; some staff increases, lowering implementation to 15 years; the optimum 10-year time horizon.

The master plan was based to some extent on the recommendations of the Algonquin Park Advisory Committee. Of this Committee's original thirty-six recommendations, thirty-two were accepted wholly or in modified form.

Ministry officials thoroughly discussed with Council all matters relevant to these recommendations and Council has debated them as well. The government wanted to defer the banning on non-burnable containers until it had decided on an overall provincial policy but Council felt Algonquin Park was a special case and that the ban should be enforced now.

The Council was very disappointed with the inability of the government to come to grips with implementation of the master plan and passed unanimously the following motion:

In our attempts to monitor the implementation of the Algonquin Park Master Plan, the Provincial Parks Council has been extremely disappointed and concerned over the fact that so little of the Plan's directives have been initiated to date.

If the Ministry of Natural Resources is indeed serious about going forward with the Algonquin Park Master Plan and the subsequent monitoring and evaluations by our body, then the Council strongly urges the Ministry to make available the necessary financial and human resources to implement this important project.

Financial responsibilities, and in turn moral commitments, assumed by jurisdictions associated with a 'near-urban' park development, could take many forms. Alternatives include direct assistance through partial financing of land acquisition; assistance with park development costs; or, assistance in the provision of water and sewer services.

Two other forms of assistance that are of a different nature are the ready acceptance, on the part of the impacted jurisdictions, of a loss of tax revenue that would have accrued from lands occupied by a 'near-urban' provincial park and, secondly, support by the impacted jurisdiction for zoning adjacent to the proposed park area that would be compatible with the park land use itself.

Plan implementation of a 'near-urban' provincial park can provide a good opportunity for local organizations and groups, as well as the private sector, to assist in the planning and provision of operational programs and services. The Division of Parks should make use of these resources where and when possible so long as they are compatible with the overall park objective.

In conclusion, there is a need for natural 'near-urban' parks in southern Ontario. The objective of preserving aspects of the natural landscape, and providing recreation activities that are compatible with the maintenance of this landscape, adjacent to centres of population which are readily accessible to individuals living there, is one that the Division of Parks of the Ministry of Natural Resources should strive to achieve. While the need is evident and the concept good, success in achieving it will be measured in terms of the way the Province consults, cooperates with and responds to the interests of municipalities, regional governments, conservation authorities and the publics associated with the areas that offer potential as 'near-urban' parks.



2 The Council was given, on August 11, a bus tour and an air tour of the Park during which it visited the Wildlife Research Station, some of the logging operations and various highlights along the Highway 60 corridor. Ministry of Natural Resources personnel answered Council's questions.

3 Council heard from the Leaseholders in the Park on August 12. Public meetings were held in Bancroft on September 26 and in Toronto on October 20. It would be impossible to give details of all the points brought to the attention of the Council. However, some of the salient issues included:

- a) the termination of private cottage leases.
- b) the question of party size, and quotas, along with the need for an adequate information system.
- c) a reservation system.
- d) the size of the Wilderness Zone.
- e) access roads, access points and perimeter parks.
- f) the values, needs (and desires) of people living on the park perimeter.

The above and many other matters are of enormous importance to those with a history of interest in the Park, to those who live in areas within a day or two's drive of the Park, and to future generations. The Council wrestled with the crucial question of its mandate: whether to recommend changes in the master plan which might compromise its credibility, and by implication the credibility of all Master Plans, or to record identified issues raised both by the public and the Council itself, and recommend interim measures to affect the timing and staging of implementation. After discussion with the Ministry it was decided to follow the second course.

All individuals or groups who presented briefs personally, sent them by mail or both, were answered by a letter from the Chairman summarizing Council's feelings on matters discussed or referring the correspondent to Ministry of Natural Resources personnel.
(See page 17).



4 The Council debated at great length, not only on matters brought before it by the public or Ministry of Natural Resources but also issues which grew out of them and raised new questions and problems.

Algonquin Park, and its problems, is a microcosm of our society, and its problems, both extraordinarily complex. What are the goals for our parks in general and Algonquin Park in particular? Who sets these goals? Is preservation or recreation a higher priority?

Again and again antagonistic viewpoints were present in Council meetings which points up vital differences between youth and age, between fishermen and canoeists, and between local inhabitants and those living in large cities. It was and remains the task of the Council to recommend to the government ways in which these hostilities can be reconciled.

The following is the text of the letter sent to all those who made presentations to the Council at the Bancroft hearing.

January 9, 1976

On behalf of the Provincial Parks Council, thank you for your presentation to us in Bancroft on September 26, 1975.

I would like to personally apologize for not writing you sooner. The Parks Council has had some difficulty in clarifying its role in relationship to Algonquin Park.

The Parks Council is to advise the Minister of Natural Resources on the implementation of the Algonquin Park Master Plan. Council can suggest that a particular aspect of the Plan should be receiving priority consideration or that care and time should be taken in implementing a part of the Plan.

A review of the Master Plan will take place in five years at which time any necessary major changes can be made. Council will continue to observe and monitor aspects of the Plan which may require changes when the Plan is reviewed.

Rather than send an individual letter to everyone who presented a brief, I am sending this letter because it will bring you up to date on what has been happening regarding Algonquin, both within the Ministry and within the Parks Advisory Council.

Party Size and Quotas

The whole question of party size and quotas is causing a good deal of concern. This concern can, we feel, be accommodated by a gradual or slow implementation program. The Parks Council is suggesting the quota program only be implemented for the Highway 60 corridor access points in 1976. It is along this highway corridor that most of the congestion develops. Essential to running the quota system, is a good information system. Such a system already exists along the highway 60 corridor.

The Master Plan recommends that nine be the maximum party size. Council is recommending that party size be restricted to twelve as an interim measure for 1976. This would give the camps and organized groups a chance to adjust and it would prevent the abuses of very large groups.

Outboard Motors

It is Council's understanding that the proposed ban on outboard motors and carts has been postponed by the Minister for one year. Council agrees with this postponement. Council is also recommending that this period be used to closely monitor the use of outboard motors and carts on the 'traditional' fishing lakes and within the recreation-utilization zone. Such a monitoring would allow an opportunity to further assess the problem, or lack of it, that outboard motors create.



Climbing the Rocks at Chutes Park

Primitive Zones

A number of briefs suggested the need to increase the size of the Primitive Zone. Certainly, it is the feeling of Council that such a proposal should be given careful scrutiny and consideration over the next few years so that when the Plan is reviewed, such a zone change could be effectively contemplated.

Access Roads

On the closing and opening of access roads, access points, and/or perimeter parks, it is the feeling of Council that further investigation and understanding will have to be acquired before a responsible opinion can be given.

Cottage Leases

Regarding the termination of cottage leases, this is a policy that has been in effect for a number of years and is in sympathy with the goal and objectives of the Master Plan. To change the policy now is illogical.

These are some of the items that have been considered and are under review by the Parks Council. If you have additional comments or questions about Algonquin, we would appreciate receiving them.

Thank you again for your contribution.

Sincerely,

G. Priddle, Chairman

Public Hearings

Council held public hearings in Thunder Bay, Bancroft and Toronto. These hearings were well advertised and attended. Some presentations took the form of personal letters, others were oral. The majority of the representations consisted of a written brief accompanied by an oral presentation. Everyone attending the public hearings had an opportunity to speak.

Council did not argue with the content of these presentations in the public hearings. Questions that were asked of the delegates were strictly for clarification.

Council members were instructed to give individual consideration to each representation. A succinct summary statement of the main points raised in the presentation was made. Council members then discussed the briefs. After discussion any member of Council could suggest comments that he (she) felt should go forward to the Minister. In some cases resolutions were put forward and voted upon. The presentations were sent to the Minister with Council's comments and resolutions. A copy of what the Minister received was sent to the presenter of the brief.

These briefs have a significant impact on Council's overall deliberations. Further, these public hearings are a significant part of its function. Anyone wishing to know the response to a specific presentation should write or phone the Council office.

The following is a list of the briefs that were received by Council:

Thunder Bay: May 12, 13, 1975

- 1 Lakehead Sailing Club
- 2 Remi Lake Ski Club
- 3 Dawson Trail Association
- 4 Municipality of Shuniah
- 5 Thunder Bay Yacht Club
- 6 Lakehead Region Conservation Authority
- 7 Northwestern Ontario Mobile Campers' Association
- 8 The Handicapped Action Group
- 9 The Lake Superior Wilderness Adventure School
- 10 William E. Sault
- 11 Thunder Bay Rovers
- 12 Voyageur Wilderness Programme (Charles Erickson)
- 13 Thunder Bay Naturalists
- 14 Steve Lukinuk
- 15 Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
- 16 Mrs. Marian Childs
- 17 Mr. Tom Miyata
- 18 Coalition for Wilderness

Bancroft Briefs: September 26, 1975

- 1 Canadian Institute of Forestry, Algonquin Section
- 2 Bill Levinsky: *Algonquin Park for All Canadians*
- 3 Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
- 4 Ontario Wildlands League
- 5 Haliburton Economic Development Commission
- 6 The National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada
- 7 Cache Lake Leaseholders Association
- 8 Dave Hobson, Hastings-Peterborough Liberal Association
- 9 Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce
- 10 Algonquin Park Leaseholders Association
- 11 Charles Foster
- 12 Bancroft Fish and Game Protective Association, John Struik
- 13 Ann Pronovich
- 14 Dr. John Marsh, Trent University
- 15 Mr. Earl Gordon
- 16 Mr. Douglas Drewry
- 17 Pembroke Outdoor Sportsmen's Club
- 18 Mr. and Mrs. David Minden
- 19 Residents of Kiosk
- 20 Mr. David Talliot
- 21 Mr. and Mrs. H.M. Newton
- 22 Mr. Emerson McCormack
- 23 Mrs. Henry Fritts
- 24 Mr. George Smith
- 25 Sharon Lott
- 26 Mr. Jim Stalker
- 27 Bancroft Fish and Game Protective Association
- 28 A Group from the Picton Area

Toronto Briefs: October 20, 1975

- 1 Haliburton County Development Commission
- 2 Sierra Club of Ontario
- 3 Judy Brandow: *Save Etobicoke's Lakefront*
- 4 Girl Guides of Canada
- 5 National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada
- 6 Ontario Professional Foresters Association
- 7 Dr. J. Jackson, Brock University
- 8 Ontario Trail Riders' Association
- 9 Algonquin Wildlands League
- 10 Conservation Council of Ontario
- 11 Rondeau Park Leaseholders
- 12 Ontario Camping Association
- 13 Blackstone and Woods Bay Resident and Cottagers' Association
- 14 Paul Aird, University of Toronto
- 15 Leo Burosch, University of Waterloo
- 16 Frank Barry
- 17 The Tobermory Club for Environmental Quality
- 18 Allen Smutlo, Tobermory
- 19 Mr. Mac McLean
- 20 Mr. C.F. Campbell, Windsor Board of Education
- 21 Mr. Charles Sheppey, Ottawa

Briefs and representations were also received by Council throughout the course of the year at times other than the public meetings.

Other Business

Rowdyism

Council received considerable evidence during the year about the seriousness and magnitude of rowdyism in the parks.

This resulted in two actions:

- 1 A resolution was passed unanimously by Council that was worded as follows:

The Parks Advisory Council is deeply concerned about the question of rowdyism in our Provincial Parks.

The nature and magnitude of this issue has been brought to us forcefully through personal, written and oral communication as well as by material presented to us by Ministry staff.

It is our conviction and fear that many Ontarians have given up camping in the Provincial Parks because of rowdyism.

Parks Regulations must be enforced be it by whatever means. We realize the initial cost is high, but such monies are really an investment that will be returned by the reduction of vandalism and damage to government and personal property.

- 2 The Council has expressed to the Minister its interest in considering the matter of Park Rowdyism in 1976.

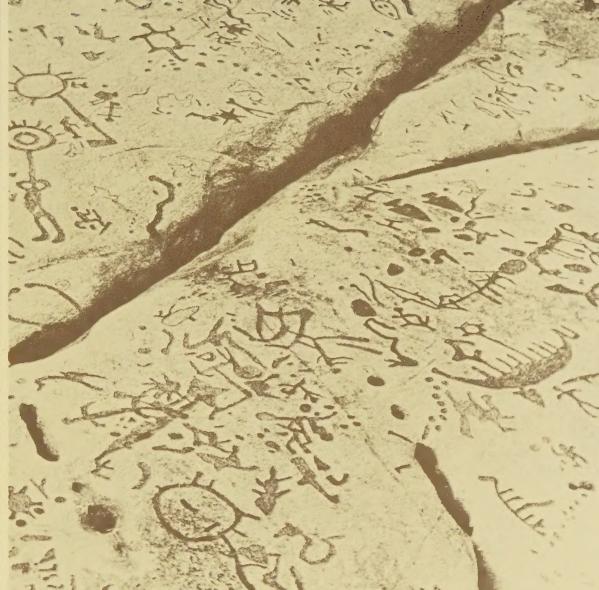
Historical Parks

Considerable interest and concern was expressed by Council about the transfer of the Historical Sites Branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources to the Ministry of Culture and Recreation.

This resulted in the following actions:

- 1 A motion was passed that the Chairman of Council should approach the Minister of Natural Resources for a closer definition of the Terms of Reference of the Council on the question of the transfer of the Historical Sites Branch to the new Ministry of Culture and Recreation.
- 2 It was strongly urged that Historical Parks be made a separate classification in the Park system to ensure cooperation between the Ministries.

Note: The two Ministries decided to include a historical classification within the Parks Classification System.



Indian Rock Carvings at Petroglyphs Park

Park Policy

Of primary concern for the future of the Provincial Parks is the establishment of an effective park policy. The Parks Council unanimously agreed to the following resolution:

There is a need for a park policy for the Province at this time. A policy should be implemented as soon as possible. The urgency exists because of the rapidly increasing demand for parks and open space and the rapidly diminishing environmental base for wilderness areas and nature reserves.

The Parks Council should be given an opportunity to become involved in the establishment of an Official Park Policy. This matter should be the primary and initial concern of Council in 1976.

Communication

In a number of different ways, there is a problem with communication between the Ministry and the public. The following motions were passed by Council:

- 1 The Provincial Park Regulations should be made readily available in an understandable form at all provincial parks, free of charge.
- 2 That the government prepare a summary statement, to be updated annually, of the status of the preparation of park master plans and the designation of parks by classification for all provincial parks in Ontario.
- 3 That the Parks Council be provided with the projected costs of the implementation of completed park master plans and estimates of the cost of implementing draft master plans if available.

The Future

Council looks forward to a very important and busy 1976. During the course of our first year's deliberations, it became obvious that there were certain issues that we should continue to discuss and there were other issues to which serious consideration should be given.

Park Policy

A definite park policy is needed as soon as possible. This should be our primary consideration in 1976.

Park Planning and Legislation

Out of Council's discussions arose the need to consider and understand the park master planning process. Intimately tied to this question, is the matter of the official and legal status of a park's plan after the master planning process has been completed.

Continuing Business

- 1 Monitoring the implementation of the Algonquin Park Master Plan.
- 2 Park Classification, particularly the waterways and historical parks document.
- 3 Rowdyism: consideration of the magnitude and possible solutions to the problem.

Public Hearings

This is an essential part of Council's functions and should continue.

The Relationship Between the Public and Private Sector

This is a critical area of inquiry, and that arrangements will have to be made between the public and private sector if our provincial open-spaces are to be properly maintained.

Council Meetings for 1976 have been scheduled as follows:

Dorset: February 4, 5, 6
Toronto: April 21, 22, 23 (Public Hearings)
Kapuskasing: June 2, 3, 4 (Public Hearings)
The Bruce Peninsula: July 8, 9, 10
(Public Hearings)
Kingston: October 14, 15, 16 (Public Hearings)
Toronto: December 2, 3, 4

All of which is respectfully submitted.

George Priddle, Chairman

Front Cover Herony at
Grundy Lake Park

The photographs included in
this Annual Report were
taken from the newly
designed Ontario Provincial
Park leaflets.



Ministry of
Natural
Resources

Hon. Leo Bernier
Minister

Dr J K Reynolds
Deputy Minister

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